

REMARKS

Entry of the amendments to the claims and to the following remarks is respectfully requested. Claims 11 and 17 have been amended. Please cancel claims 1-7 and 10, without prejudice.

Claim Objections

Regarding the objection to claim 10, Applicant respectfully notes that claim 10 has been canceled, without prejudice. Withdrawal of the objection is requested.

Claim Rejections – 35 U.S.C. §112

Reconsideration of the rejection of claims 1-7 and 10-21 under 35 U.S.C. §112, first paragraph, is respectfully requested. First, Applicant respectfully points that claims 1-7, 10 and 12 have been canceled without prejudice. Regarding claims 11 and 13-21, Applicant respectfully points out that independent claims 11 and 17 have been amended to remove language reciting “the gap between the substantially rigid planar base and the substantially planar flexible cover is less than 1×10^{-4} meters.” Accordingly, withdrawal of the objection to claims 11 and 13-21 is respectfully requested.

Claim Rejections – 35 U.S.C. §102

Regarding the rejection of claims 1, 2, 4-6 and 10 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Jee, Applicant respectfully notes that claims 1, 2, 4-6 and 10 have been canceled without prejudice.

Claim Rejections – 35 U.S.C. §103

Regarding the rejection of claims 1-5 and 8 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable by Yao-Joe Yang in view of Jee, Applicant respectfully notes that claims 1-5 and 8 have been canceled, without prejudice.

Reconsideration of the rejection of claims 7, 11, 13 and 15-21 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Yao-Joe and Jee in further view of Leonetti is respectfully requested. First, Applicant notes claim 7 has been canceled without prejudice. Regarding claims 11, 13 and 15-16, Applicant respectfully points out that independent claim 11 has been amended to include additional language and recites “a rigid cover over said array of squeeze film dampers”. Yao-Joe, Jee and Leonetti fail to show or suggest a rigid cover over an array of squeeze film dampers. Accordingly, independent claim 11 is in condition for allowance. Claims 13, and 15-16 which depend from independent claim 11 are therefore also allowable.

Regarding claims 17-21, independent claim 17 has been amended to recite “placing a rigid cover over said array of squeeze film dampers”. Yao-Joe, Jee and Leonetti do not show or suggest placing a rigid cover over an array of squeeze film dampers. Therefore, independent claim 17 is in condition for allowance. Claims 18-21 which depend from claim 17 are therefore allowable, as well.

Reconsideration of the rejection of claim 12 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Yao-Joe, Jee and Leonetti in further view of Murakami is respectfully requested. Regarding claim 12, there is no suggestion or motivation to combine all four of these references together. Murakami simply shows a cover that is mounted on an automobile engine and provides no teaching or suggestion of squeeze film dampers or an array of squeeze film dampers having a structure as set forth in independent claim 11 from which claim 12 depends. Yao-Joe, Jee and Leonetti all fail to suggest and provide no motivation for a rigid foam cover over an array of squeeze film dampers. Additionally, Jee does not teach other use of flexible cover for a squeeze film damper. Yao-Joe does not teach or suggest an array or rigid foam covers placed over an array of squeeze film dampers. Furthermore, Leonetti discusses the use of

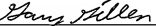
reflective surfaces with acoustic absorbent materials mounted on a base surface which add weight to the structure, thereby deviating from the present invention. There is no suggestion in Leonetti of squeeze film dampers with a support structure connecting a base plate and a flexible cover that encloses a volume. Accordingly, there is no basis to combine all four of the cited references together and independent claim 11 is allowable over the proposed combination of Yao-Joe, Jee, Leonetti and Murakami. Claims 13-16 which depend from allowable independent claim 11 are therefore also allowable.

Conclusion

In view of the aforesaid, reconsideration and allowance of all claims at issue are respectfully solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

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